MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION
July 22, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: PETER W. RODMAN PWR

SUBJECT: New York Times on CSCE, 1969-1975

New York Times editorials supported the idea of CSCE from 1969-72. However, they consistently backed our insistence that Berlin be addressed first and that MBFR be taken up in the Conference or in parallel. On this basis, the Times reached a peak of enthusiasm in 1972. (Tab D) By 1973, the Times had rediscovered the oppressive nature of the Soviet system; ever since Stage I convened in July 1973, the Times has consistently pushed Basket III and expressed skepticism about Soviet policy.

-- In 1969, the Times endorsed a proposal by a UNA/USA Panel calling for a European Security Commission "to prepare the principles of a general European settlement." (Feb. 2) On November 12, the Times saw the emerging East-West dialogue as "itself . . . a stabilizing factor." On December 7, the Times recommended negotiations on concrete issues, with "many years of patience and persistence," to advance the "vital process" of detente. [1969 editorials, Tab A.]

-- In 1970, the Times hailed the FRG's treaties with Poland, the USSR, and Czechoslovakia because, once they are ratified, "the way would be open" for a European Security Conference and MBFR talks. [Tab B.]

-- On March 31, 1971, Reston complained of the Administration's skepticism about a Conference, because he felt mutual troop reduction was "worth discussing." [Tab C.]

-- On Nov. 21, 1972, the Times was more enthusiastic. They decided that the commencement of MBFR and SALT II made a CSCE "worthwhile." Brezhnev's goals to secure the status quo in Central Europe had already been achieved, with the FRG-GDR Treaty. The Times concluded happily: "The emerging theme of the post-cold war era is a belief that the process of negotiation can promote mutual confidence as much as the outcome of negotiation." [Tab D].

-- In 1973, the Times was skeptical that CSCE would achieve any relaxation of Soviet rule in Eastern Europe (July 3). Then it was aroused by Sir Alec Douglas-Home's speech at the opening of Stage I calling for improvements in "the life of ordinary people." (July 9). The Times then urged that the West "hammer home" the importance of Basket III (Sept. 19). [1973 editorials, Tab E].

-- In 1974, the Times cited the suppression of Soviet dissidents as evidence of the difficulty of getting the Soviets to do more than lip service to the CSCE principles of free exchange of ideas (Feb. 3). They insisted "further progress" was needed on CBM's and Basket III (March 29). [1974 editorials, Tab F].

-- Nevertheless the editorial of July 21, 1975 [Tab G] is far more extreme and cynical than any of its antecedents.

In short, the July 1975 editorial is an innovation in several respects: They have long known of our skepticism; they acknowledged in 1972 that Willy Brandt gave it all away already; they were rightly skeptical in 1973 that anything significant should be expected from it. Never before did they say that CSCE "should not have happened" or that it "could mislead many into believing that peace already has arrived."

(A)

N.Y. Times, Nov. 12, 1969

Europe's New Security Patterns

The Warsaw Pact's renewed proposals for a European Security Conference are more likely to develop into a process than an early event.

A conference of 31 countries, or even the preparatory Helsinki meeting which the East now proposes be held nearly next year, could only be a propaganda forum unless concrete agreements had been negotiated in advance.

There is even a possibility now that the annual NATO Ministerial meeting in December may accept "in principle" the idea that a conference can ultimately be held when agreements are in sight. But what is significant about the current trend is not the imminence of such agreements but the approach of a new form of East-West dialogue.

The vague idea previously advanced by Moscow that a comprehensive new security system in Europe replace NATO and the Warsaw Pact is no longer in the forefront of Eastern proposals. Instead of dissolution of NATO and withdrawal of American troops, priority now is given to a network of bilateral East-West treaties renouncing force and the threat of force.

But Moscow's central objective remains unaltered. It is to confirm the status quo in Europe, including the division of Germany, and to achieve Western recognition of Eastern Europe as a Soviet sphere of influence. What has changed is the reaction in the West—and especially in Bonn—to Moscow's proposals.

Until 1966 the West insisted that the reunification of Germany must precede new security arrangements in Europe, lest the division of Germany and Europe be frozen. A coming together of the two parts of Germany, it is now realized, can only be achieved with the consent of Germany's eastern neighbors. The prerequisite is a long period of détente and improved relations between West Germany and Eastern Europe.

The new Brandt Government in Bonn now plans to step up negotiations with Moscow for a network of agreements with the East—including East Germany—renouncing force. Bonn is prepared to give East Germany increased recognition as a second state within the German nation and, in separate negotiations with Warsaw, to confirm the Oder-Neisse frontier with Poland. In return, Bonn seeks to move toward diplomatic relations with Poland, more travel and contacts between East and West Germany and, ultimately, liberalization of the East German Communist regime.

It is in this context that the NATO countries now are considering a much broader agenda for discussion with the East. Other NATO countries are prepared to negotiate renunciation-of-force agreements. Exchange of observation posts on both sides of the Iron Curtain is suggested to provide assurance against surprise attack. Mutual force reductions by NATO and the Warsaw Pact could maintain the military balance in Central Europe at lower cost.

None of these negotiations can be expected to achieve dramatic results quickly or to terminate the 24-year military confrontation in the heart of Europe. But the dialogue itself would be a stabilizing factor, for it could not continue if there were a new Berlin crisis, harassment on the access routes or other Soviet menaces toward the West.

N.Y. Times

Feb. 2, 1969

Toward a European Dialogue

Agreement has been widespread for some time that a United States initiative is long overdue to restore confidence and a sense of purpose in the North Atlantic alliance. There has also been general recognition of the need to move beyond that toward reconciliation between East and West Europe. Unfortunately, American policy toward this area of vital interest has been dangerously sterile for a decade.

The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia stimulated renewed expressions of American commitment to Western Europe, closer consultations among the NATO allies, some tentative new movement toward increased intra-Western European cooperation and agreement to halt the decline in West European force levels. But these minimum moves give no hint of the kind of imaginative long-range approach the situation requires.

Proposals for a new European policy released today by a panel of scholars, businessmen and former officials established by the United Nations Association of the United States lean heavily on old ideas for North Atlantic cooperation without exploring adequately why the old ways no longer work. But the panel has broken new ground with its recommendation for creation of a European Security Commission, composed of Eastern and Western powers, to prepare the principles of a general European settlement, including arms reduction in central Europe.

The proposed commission would provide the missing framework for a continuing multilateral dialogue in Europe. It would relieve European fears—East and West—of a big-power deal made over their heads. It would bring the two Germanys together for discussion of their common destiny. And, while preparing the way for a long-range settlement, it could help prevent the development of crises that set back progress toward a settlement.

This is an idea that could give fresh purpose to President Nixon's proposed tour of Western European capitals next spring. If the West Europeans approve, it could become the basis for an early summit conference of the Big Four.

Peace, Not a Sword . . .

Twenty-eight years after Pearl Harbor thrust the United States into World War II and almost a quarter-century after Hitler's defeat, a divided Europe still awaits its long-delayed peace settlement. But, for the first time, there are signs—such as the statements last week by the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries—that a process is beginning through which that European settlement may ultimately be brought about.

The olive branches now being extended from East to West across Europe contain many thorns of suspicion. Moscow's five-year-old proposal for a European Security Conference, pressed forward with new urgency this year, still impresses the West as an effort to gain increased international recognition of East Germany and of the *status quo* in a Europe that would remain divided. Retroactive acceptance of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 might also be implied. The mere holding of a conference, whether or not any agreements emerged from it, could serve this Eastern purpose.

• • •

But some Eastern European countries see in the conference proposal—and the discussions it has stimulated—an opportunity for increased bilateral contacts with the West and increased independence from Soviet control. For their part, most of the NATO countries—despite some shadings of difference—now believe that an atmosphere of *détente* and of improved relations between West Germany and the East is prerequisite to ending the division of Germany and Europe. That division cannot be ended without the East's consent. The problem is that *détente* could also freeze the division of Europe and there is suspicion that this is the central Soviet purpose.

A solution to this dilemma—advanced by the Grand Coalition Government in Bonn three years ago and now being pushed forward even more imaginatively by the new Government headed by Chancellor Brandt—has become the basis of Western policy. It calls on the West to take the initiative in concrete proposals for negotiation with the East, proposals that link atmospheric *détente* with substantive improvements that either erode the division of Europe or, at least, ease the hardships it has imposed.

Moscow's proposal for a European Security Conference, in effect, is being treated as the West finally came to treat the Soviet proposals for "general and complete disarmament." Once total disarmament was accepted as the ultimate objective, it became possible to negotiate on realistic "first steps" and "partial measures." Similarly, the NATO ministers last week pronounced themselves "receptive" to negotiations on concrete issues that could lead to a well-prepared European Security Conference productive of real, rather than propaganda, results.

N.Y. Times
Dec. 7, 1969

• • •

Twenty-six such issues for negotiation reportedly have been studied within NATO. Those mentioned in the NATO declaration on European security include such items as mutual force reductions, improved access to Berlin, a *modus vivendi* between East and West Germany and freer movement of people, ideas and information. Simple arms-control measures, such as the exchange of military observers, are suggested as companions to force reductions. And all this would proceed against the background of Soviet-American negotiations to limit strategic weapons.

The Moscow communiqué of the Warsaw Pact countries indicates readiness to start down this route. Berlin issues already are in discussion among the Big Four. West German talks with the Soviet Union on renunciation of the use of force and with Poland on the Oder-Neisse border are imminent. The two important Western overtures yet to be taken up are those for talks involving East and West Germany and for discussion of balanced force reductions in Central Europe. But these should not lag far behind.

An era of confrontation appears indeed to be yielding to one of negotiation. Many years of patience and persistence will be needed to achieve results. But a vital process has begun.

(B)

N.Y. Times, Nov. 23, 1970

Peace on the Oder-Neisse

In completing the Polish-West German treaty, which affirms the Oder-Neisse line as Poland's western border, Bonn has taken another long step toward the Central European settlement. The importance of the new pact is almost as great as that of the Soviet-West German treaty which preceded it.

Reconciliation with Poland promises to play a catalytic role in West Germany's projected détente with the East, similar to the role that was played by reconciliation with France in Bonn's acceptance by the West. No other country has suffered so much at Germany's hands as Poland—not only in World War II, but in centuries of conflict. Now that Poland has praised Chancellor Willy Brandt as an anti-Nazi and is preparing to open full-scale diplomatic relations with Bonn other Communist countries can no longer credibly invoke the West German "menace."

The opening of diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia, after resolving differences over the Munich Pact, undoubtedly will be negotiated this winter, followed by similar talks with Hungary and Bulgaria. The consequences could be profound.

East Germany will be isolated and under increasing pressure to follow the rest of East Europe into improved contacts with Bonn. The Brezhnev Doctrine, proclaiming Russia's right to intervene in neighboring Communist countries, will lose its alleged justification when the German "danger" has disappeared. Increased West German credits, trade and technology should give East Europe greater independence vis-à-vis the Soviet Union.

An obstacle to West Europe's political union will be removed. Germany's western neighbors have never been willing to support German irredentism or to contemplate, through political union, making West Germany's territorial claims their own. Bonn's new realism in calling a border a border eliminates most of this concern.

Once the Soviet, Polish and other East European treaties have been ratified by the Bundestag, the way would be open for a European Security Conference that would further consolidate the territorial status quo. Negotiation of mutual and balanced force reductions by NATO and the Warsaw Pact would become a possibility.

German ratification of the Polish treaty depends on how rapidly the Poles move to permit departure of the "several tens of thousands" of ethnic Germans they have agreed could emigrate to Germany. The Polish treaty, in turn, could help Mr. Brandt obtain ratification of his treaty with the Soviet Union. There has always been more support for the Polish treaty among opposition Christian Democratic deputies than for the Soviet pact. That support is likely to be increased by the favorable terms Mr. Brandt has obtained on the ethnic German issue and in accepting the Oder-Neisse border without yielding on the Potsdam accords, the rights of the Western allies and the possibility of a peace treaty with a reunited Germany.

The Brandt government has indicated that the Polish and Soviet treaties will be submitted for ratification together as a package, and perhaps the treaties with Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria as well, if they can be negotiated in time. The timetable depends on how soon Four Power agreement can be reached on Berlin. For, unless access is improved and West Berlin's links with West Germany accepted, the Soviet treaty—and perhaps all the others—will remain a dead letter.

N.Y. Times Dec. 11, 1970

Arming to Parley

Two decades ago Winston Churchill laid down the basic rationale that still governs history's most remarkable alliance of free peoples, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "I do not hold that we should rearm in order to fight," he said. "I hold that we should rearm in order to parley."

The strength, unity and steady political purpose of the NATO countries, despite derelictions, have brought the West safely through years of cold war into a period in which confrontation with the East is beginning to give way to negotiation. But there are still ups and downs; periods of tension in Soviet-Western relations, such as have occurred since August, alternate with indications of emerging détente. Thus, the adventurous Western diplomatic probing now under way to advance a European settlement depends heavily on continued military stability, as NATO leaders have just reaffirmed at their annual ministerial meeting in Brussels.

The four-power ambassadorial meetings on Berlin and other East-West negotiations now [illegible] would have little chance for success if a reduction in Western forces were to shift the military [illegible] sharply toward Soviet predominance. It was with this in mind that the NATO ministers approved a new Alliance defense program for the Seventies and exchanged commitments such as the Nixon pledge to maintain American force levels and the European offer of a $1-billion increase in military effort over five years.

The Berlin negotiations will remain the key to détente. Progress toward agreement, reversed by Moscow last month, is likely to resume now that a Warsaw Pact conference has extracted a more favorable attitude from Walter Ulbricht, the East German leader. Bonn has made ratification of its new treaties with the Soviet Union and Poland dependent on Moscow's acceptance of unhindered access to West Berlin, improved circulation within Berlin and continued ties between West Berlin and West Germany. The NATO ministers have made it clear that Moscow will not achieve its goal of a European Security Conference until Berlin's status is bettered.

The Soviet Union has seemed ready to move in this direction. East German objections, however, have had to be overcome. In any case, the NATO decision to stand firm on Berlin and to insist on mutual, balanced force reductions or none offers the best assurance that negotiations for a stable settlement based on the territorial status quo ultimately will succeed.

(C)

Brezhnev's World View

By JAMES RESTON

Leonid I. Brezhnev's speech to the 24th Communist party Congress in Moscow is a little like President Nixon's recent State of the World Message to the U.S. Congress. It is long, vague and hopeful—a little something for everybody—but essentially it is an exercise in public relations rather than a practical basis for serious negotiation.

The tone is conciliatory, but the substance is familiar and unresolved. He wants "final recognition" of the territorial changes that took place in Europe after the Second World War—that is, general acceptance of the division of Germany and Europe as a permanent condition of the European states.

He wants the annulment of the Warsaw and NATO military alliances and the "dismantling of foreign bases"—that is, he wants the Americans to go home, leaving the Red Army as the sole dominant military force on the threshold of Europe.

He wants "the abolition of the remaining colonial regimes"—that is to say the final dismemberment of the old Western empires and the abolition of the old imperialism, but not the dismemberment of the new Communist empire or the new Communist imperialism.

"We declare that," he said, "while consistently pursuing its policy of peace and friendship among nations, the Soviet Union will continue to conduct a resolute struggle against imperialism, and firmly to rebuff the evil designs and subversions of aggressors."

Translated into the principles of Marxism and Leninism, this means the Soviet Union is following a policy of peace and friendship in Indochina, the Middle East and Cuba, for example, while the United States is pursuing a policy of aggression, subversion and imperialism in these places.

Well, "peace and friendship" on this basis, with control in the hands of men who make six-hour speeches, would not be a very cheerful prospect, but Mr. Brezhnev's long-delayed pronunciamento could have been worse.

He says he wants good relations with the United States, China, Yugoslavia and even West Germany, and his proposals for conferences on nuclear arms and disarmament, for a ban on nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons, for a reduction of arms in critical areas of confrontation, for nuclear-free zones in sensitive areas of the world and for cooperation to improve the environment of the globe—all this is well worth careful exploration.

One of the troubling aspects of the world situation at the present time is that the great powers, outside their talks on the Middle East and the limitation of strategic weapons systems, are concentrating on relatively small differences rather than getting down to the momentous issues where they both stand to gain by accommodation.

It is doubtful that China will respond favorably to Mr. Brezhnev's proposal for a conference of the world nuclear powers—and even Washington has some doubts about the wisdom of such a parley in the foreseeable future—but it would be a pity to reject this suggestion out of hand and give Moscow a monopoly on propaganda for nuclear disarmament.

The proposal for limiting arms in critical areas such as Central Europe also raises the possibility of mutual advantage. What Moscow would like—has wanted ever since the end of the last war—is to change the whole balance of power in Europe by persuading a European conference to invite the United States to withdraw from the continent. This is clearly not desired west of the Elbe River and is not even very interesting to the so-called "neo-isolationists" in the United States.

But limited withdrawals from Central Europe by the Red Army and the American expeditionary forces, and arms reduction in certain other areas are worth discussing, even in an all-European conference, which Washington has consistently regarded with undisguised skepticism.

Before any such conference, however, there is something to be said for the non-Communist nations to hold a conference of their own. For the last few years, there has been an obvious rise in nationalism in the West, and an understandable but dangerous decline in the development of collective security arrangements.

It is clear, for example, that the troubled area of the Middle East is part of the larger strategic area of Europe, yet the Western nations, divided on the Arab-Israel conflict, have separated the two theatres, ignoring the fact that Soviet naval power is now a powerful new force on the southern flank of Western Europe.

Thus, if Mr. Brezhnev did nothing else, he at least reminded the West that, for all his conciliatory proposals, his strategic and political aims remain the same, and that his emphasis within the Soviet Union is still on the development of heavy industry and arms production.

Washington, of course, is still preoccupied with the war in Vietnam, but before long the larger questions of the future of Germany and Japan—always the main targets of Soviet diplomacy—will be back in the forefront of world affairs. Brezhnev has put forward a formidable agenda of problems, and some of them are clearly worthy of careful analysis, not only by the Nixon Administration, but by the Democrats, who are trying to replace it.

N.Y. Times
March 31, 1971
p. 45

(D)

After Cold War

This is the week of new beginnings in East-West diplomacy. If SALT II, CESC and MBFR are unlikely candidates for addition to the lexicon of household phrases, they are regarded among governments of the world as symbolic inauguration of a post-cold war era.

SALT II, the second round of the Soviet-American Strategic Arms Limitations Talks, opens today in Geneva. The issues now reach even deeper into the strategic arsenals: bombers, submarines, forward-based intermediate-range missiles, the crucial question of restricting qualitative improvements within the quantitative limits already set.

SALT, more than any other process, provokes among lesser powers a sense of uneasiness over a world polity of Moscow-Washington domination. As two British analysts, Sir Bernard Burrows and Christopher Irwin, put it: "The two superpowers have become even more differentiated from their respective allies . . . since they began to deal with each other as being in a category apart."

To minimize that feature of the post-cold war era two other broader-based negotiating channels are opening. In Helsinki tomorrow, 34 ambassadors of Europe, Canada and the United States will start their preparatory work for the unwieldy Conference on European Security and Cooperation (CESC). For over a decade the Soviet Union has sought this exercise, as a device to legitimize the European status quo after World War II and establish East Germany in the world community. As it happens, these goals have already been largely achieved, particularly since this month's treaty between the two German states preparing both East and West Germany to enter the United Nations.

If diplomats of the big Western powers radiate boredom on contemplating the conference, not all are as jaded as the European politician who predicted three agenda items: "The Meaningless"—vague declarations on the renunciation of force, "The Inevitable"—increased trade, and "The Inconceivable"—withdrawal of Soviet troops from Eastern Europe.

Long-standing Western reluctance to become involved in such a fancy dress conference was eased early this year when the Soviet Union accepted parallel discussions on the issue which excites the Western alliance: Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Central Europe (MBFR). Last Thursday came announcement that these talks would open Jan. 31, probably in Switzerland. Members of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact will participate. Western governments hope that the fact of discussions-in-process will reduce domestic pressures for unilateral American troop withdrawals though on no side is there much expectation of prompt achievements.

For all the cynical chatter, there is a common and worthwhile thread running through these diplomatic occasions. In SALT, the mere act of two potential adversaries sharing with each other data and analyses of the weapons they maintain against each other has already strengthened the balance of deterrence. And in the force reduction talks, the fact of negotiation engages the two sides across Europe, even when their topic is disengagement. The emerging theme of the post-cold war era is a belief that the process of negotiation can promote mutual confidence as much as the outcome of negotiation.

N.Y. Times
Nov. 21, 1972
p. 42

(E)

N.Y. Times
July 3, 1973
p. 22

Opening to the West?

The European Security Conference opens formally in Helsinki today, and it is hardly a secret that most Westerners expect little or nothing of importance to emerge from its deliberations.

The pessimists view the Helsinki meeting merely as a forum in which Moscow may make further substantial progress toward the moral, political and psychological disarmament and neutralization of Western Europe. The optimists in the West argue, on the contrary, that Helsinki provides an opportunity to push for elimination or substantial reduction of the barriers that now impede massive contacts between the peoples of Eastern and Western Europe. These barriers range from the continued jamming of Western broadcasts east of the rusted Iron Curtain to restrictions that bar most Eastern Europeans from traveling even as far West as Vienna, not to mention Paris, Rome or London.

The Kremlin has considerable reason to prove the optimists correct. Whether it admits it or not, the West has largely accepted the legitimacy of Communist rule in Eastern Europe, acquiescing even in the reality of a divided Germany. It has been many years since responsible Western statesmen have spoken of "liberating" Eastern Europe or "rolling back" Communist rule to the Soviet border.

Moreover, it is now more than 28 years since the end of World War II. A majority of Eastern Europeans have no memory of a time when Marxism-Leninism was not the official, unchallengeable state dogma of their countries. And the more orthodox Eastern European states can see in Yugoslavia a Communist-ruled nation whose Government and party dictatorship still survive despite many years of essentially free contact with the West.

There are indeed some positive signs of relaxation in Eastern Europe. A Warsaw newspaper has been given permission to appear daily without pre-censorship, the present East German regime is appreciably less oppressive in cultural policy than it was under Ulbricht's primacy, some articles in Hungary's press discuss the housing shortage and other urgent problems there with a frankness that would have been unthinkable not so many years ago.

On balance, however, the argument that Helsinki will serve to throw open ever wider the gates between East and West is not yet entirely convincing. The Kremlin still insists on complete subservience to its foreign policy, and can hardly want large numbers of Eastern Europeans to be exposed to free discussion of that fact. (Rumania, Yugoslavia and Albania are, of course, special cases.)

Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe is still—despite much economic progress since World War II—far behind Western Europe. Some recent Western calculations suggest that—taking account of present exchange rates—West Germany and Sweden may now actually have higher per capita gross national product than the United States, and France may not lag very far behind. On similar calculations, even the most prosperous Eastern European state—East Germany—is only at about half the United States level, while Poland and Hungary are about one-third as high.

The Kremlin has certainly not forgotten the Dubcek era in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and the spontaneous Polish revolt that unseated Gomulka only two and a half years ago. For all of Mr. Brezhnev's brave talk in Bonn and Washington these past weeks, the evidence still suggests that he and his colleagues fear too extensive freedom for Eastern Europe because they doubt that anything like real fidelity to Communist ideology and, particularly, to Soviet hegemony exists among the Eastern European masses. They are probably right.

Riposte From the West

"If we do not improve the life of ordinary people at this conference we shall be asked, and with justice—what all our fine words and diplomatic phrases have achieved." This is just the kind of talk that statesmen assembled need to hear, particularly at an amorphous gathering like the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It was Britain's Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, whose candor swept like a fresh breeze through the marble corridors of Helsinki's Finlandia Hall, carrying the theme of a strong and remarkably cohesive Western response to the lofty rhetoric of the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei A. Gromyko.

The week of formal ministerial statements from 35 participating governments has ended, and subcommittees now proceed to search for agreement on meaning or substance shrouded under the opening verbiage. This conference may indeed be comparable in protocol terms only to the Congress of Vienna of 1814, but the more prosaic reality is considerably less grand.

The real questions of European security are being argued, not in Helsinki but in two tenuously related negotiations: those opening in Vienna Oct. 30 to achieve mutual and, perhaps, balanced force reductions and the ongoing Soviet-American Strategic Arms Limitations Talks. The European security conference will provide, at best, the gift wrapping for the détente which the two superpowers may or may not hand down to future generations.

The original Soviet purpose of legitimizing the ideological and military division of Europe has, in effect, already been achieved by the Berlin agreements, through West Germany's Ostpolitik, by the admission of the two German states to the United Nations. This belated realization was undoubtedly behind Mr. Gromyko's expressed wish to get the Helsinki security conference over quickly. As it is working out, it has the potential to turn into an unforeseen embarrassment for the Kremlin.

Led by Sir Alec and Secretary of State William P. Rogers, the Western allies have pushed hard to stress the tangible human forms of European cooperation: the free flow of individuals, communications, and ideas. They urged that newspapers circulate all over Europe, without censorship or restriction, that the same television programs—even news programs—go to Budapest and Moscow as to London and Copenhagen. "We should spare no effort to remove barriers which artificially limit man's own capability," said Dutch Foreign Minister Max van der Stoel; to make sure Mr. Gromyko understood, he referred specifically to writers and artists. He said people of every state had the right to "change political, economic, social and cultural systems."

In the full knowledge that such thoughts strike terror into orthodox Marxist-Leninists, Western ministers openly offered the possibility that the conference may fail. "If it were to be shown clearly in the course of our discussions that the gap between our views is still too wide, then I think it would be a dictate of honesty to say so, unambiguously," said West Germany's Walter Scheel. "We should clearly tell the public in Europe and the world that we still need time."

The victim of such a confession of failure would be Leonid I. Brezhnev, who seems to have staked his stature on the feasibility of an opening to the West at minimal cost to Soviet interests. His hope is for an impressive list of specifics from the conference on trade patterns, credits and technological sharing, leaving ideological and political co-existence in the realm of vague principles. The Western representatives, with impressive unity, want the specifics and generalities reversed.

The importance of the European security conference will not be in establishing any détente between superpowers; that is being worked over in other forums. What this conference will show is whether there is now, in fact, a community of interests among the European countries, East and West. That is, as the conference moves on, an open question.

N.Y. Times
July 9, 1973
p. 32

N.Y. Times
Sept. 19, 1973

Security and Freedom

Irony mounts upon irony as the easily-overlooked Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe resumes deliberations in Geneva.

Long a mainspring of image-seeking Soviet diplomacy, the opening session of this 35-nation assemblage in Helsinki early in the summer was deftly turned about by Western participants. Acting in uncommon unison, they succeeded in focusing the conference's attention on restrictions to free exchange of persons and ideas across Europe, a subject of obvious interest to the West and obvious embarrassment to the Kremlin.

Perhaps the Soviet planners hoped that the summer recess would allow the resumed conference to sidetrack itself into general disputations of the lofty principles which Moscow is pushing. Instead the delegations reassemble at a moment when intellectual oppression in the Soviet Union is a pressing concern. This conference now has the opportunity to place maximum impact on the belief of the Western democracies that oppression of intellectuals, suppression of unorthodox writings and inhibitions to free movement of individuals are the ultimate negation of the real security in Europe that all seek.

This point ought to be hammered home in the Geneva round of the conference. Some diplomats in Washington and in European capitals are reluctant to make what might look like cheap propaganda points against the Russians, for fear of disturbing an underlying move toward détente. This is an unworthy argument, for the real moves to lessen tensions—in trade, military cutbacks, diplomatic understandings—are being played out in forums other than the security conference. Furthermore, there are ample reasons to harbor doubts about the current ostensible Russian desire to forge new ties to the West; now more than ever the Western governments can avoid sacrificing important principles in pursuit of an illusory détente.

It was a distinguished Austrian diplomat, Walter Wodak, who posed the key questions which the Conference on European Security and Cooperation should address: "Will they [the Soviet leaders] now, having achieved military equality, and their security needs being recognized, take part as equal partners in the international division of labor, drop their policy of self-sufficiency and devote their wealth and productive capacity to raise the standard of living of their people? Will they give up intellectual isolation and allow freer movement of people and ideas?"

If the conference is to have any genuine meaning for the security of the peoples of Europe, it must achieve positive answers to questions such as these.

(F)

N.Y. Times, Feb. 3, 1974

Soviet Double Standard

Moscow's complaint that the West is organizing "ideological subversion" of the Soviet Union by publishing Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's criticism of the secret police and prison camp system is replete with irony. It illustrates again the difficulty of achieving in practice the freer exchange of information and ideas to which the Kremlin has paid lip service at the Geneva Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The fact is that the Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Corporation have leaned over backward in their very limited Russian-language accounts of Mr. Solzhenitsyn's new book, "The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956"—undoubtedly in the belief that this treatment was in the interest of détente. The West German radio, which took a different view and broadcast excerpts from the book, has found Moscow resuming the jamming it had suspended last September.

At the same time, American correspondents in Moscow have been criticized officially and privately for undermining the Soviet-American détente by writing articles about dissident intellectuals and other subjects deemed injurious to the Soviet image Moscow would like to project abroad. Meanwhile, the Soviet press has been having a field day with Western social problems and with economic difficulties stemming from the energy crisis. Americans are portrayed in the press as threatened with factory shutdowns and mass unemployment while suffering from galloping inflation, strikes, soaring medical bills, racism and corruption.

The double standard in Soviet official thinking is nothing new. Détente, Moscow argues, forbids Western criticism of Soviet behavior, but at the same time Soviet Communist Secretary Leonid Brezhnev insists that peaceful coexistence requires "intensification" of the "ideological struggle" at home and abroad to safeguard the Soviet regime and achieve a Communist world. Typical is a new "history" of World War II, which accuses the United States of plotting with Britain and France to smash the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet contention clearly is that Moscow is free to tell lies about the West but the West must not tell the truth about the Soviet Union. That is a contention more likely to dampen than to advance détente.

N.Y. Times
March 24, 1974 p.34

Soviet Shadows...

The news from Moscow is somber. Little or no progress has been achieved by Secretary of State Kissinger's visit on a new strategic arms limitation treaty (SALT), on mutual force reductions in Central Europe, on trade and emigration issues or on the Mideast peace negotiations. Watergate, for the first time, evidently has begun to play an important part in Soviet calculations, as has the intensified questioning on both sides about the value of the Soviet-American relationship.

There is new lip-service to making the improvement in Soviet-American relations "irreversible"—a pledge that events alone can determine, not pious hopes. And President Nixon has renewed his promise to fly to Moscow this summer for another summit meeting, but chances of any substantial accomplishment already have been tentatively downgraded. A new SALT agreement at that time appears unlikely; indeed, the world is being told that a broad exchange of views is enough to justify a summit conference, no spectacular agreements are required.

On SALT, instead of the "conceptual breakthrough" for which Mr. Kissinger hoped, there is a Soviet response to the new American proposal that does little to close the gap between the positions of the two sides. The United States wants to limit Soviet deployment of new missiles that can carry MIRV multiple warheads. The aim evidently is to assure "essential equivalence" in MIRV-able payloads of land-based missiles and in the payloads of other delivery systems, including bombers. But the Soviet Union plainly wants to limit MIRV warhead numbers, where the United States is thousands ahead—but with warheads much smaller than those the Soviet Union ultimately will be able to deploy.

Despite some "clarification" of Soviet emigration policy, there is no optimism on the American side that the modifications go far enough to achieve a compromise with Senate opponents of trade legislation lifting tariff discrimination against Soviet exports.

• • •

About the only area of progress appears to be on the Geneva Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, where the United States has agreed to a 35-nation summit meeting to ratify an agreement—if one is reached. But to build confidence in Europe, further progress is needed on East-West "human contacts" and security measures such as exchanges of military observers and, above all, advance notice of maneuvers.

The West has proposed that two months' notice be given of any European land maneuvers of division-size or larger, with detailed information to be provided about the units involved, dates and destinations. The Soviet Union heretofore has offered to give only five or six days' notice of maneuvers close to the Iron Curtain—and to limit such notice to those involving an army corps or more. That would mean that most maneuvers would not be subject to notice and that notice, when given, would arrive well after Western intelligence had detected the movements.

The Western proposals have the support of most neutrals; some, Yugoslavia particularly, would prefer notice on all large troop movements, not merely maneuvers. The Soviet Union, as a result, is under some pressure to improve its offer and there evidently were some indications in the Kissinger visit that this would be done. Substantial progress here would also improve prospects for the Vienna negotiations on mutual force reductions.

The atmosphere of the Moscow talks was friendly, but there was no give on anything of substance. The Soviet leaders exuded optimism about future cooperation; thus far, however, concessions that would make concrete agreements possible are being held in abeyance.

(G)

European 'Security' . . .

The 35-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, now nearing its climax after 32 months of semantic quibbling, should not have happened. Never have so many struggled for so long over so little as the conference's 100-page declaration of good intentions in East-West relations. So little, and yet so much.

So little, because after hundreds of diplomats drafted this document, they specified that it will not be legally binding on anyone. So much, because it commits the United States, Canada and 33 nations of Europe to the "inviolability of frontiers," symbolically ratifying the territorial status quo, including the division of Germany and Europe and the Soviet Union's huge annexations of East European territory, including all three independent Baltic states plus large chunks of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Rumania.

What the West gets out of the C.S.C.E. declaration is a reference to the possibility of border changes by peaceful agreement—meaningless except to protect the West German Government from its domestic critics—and some vague Soviet pledges to permit freer movement of persons and information.

The only military item in what originally was to be an all-European security treaty is a promise by the Russians (and everyone else) to give three weeks notice, and to admit observers, for military maneuvers that involve more than 25,000 men within some 150 miles of their frontiers. But it does not cover other military movements such as a reinforcing move or an actual invasion of Eastern or Western Europe!

If this document now were to be signed by the diplomats who negotiated it, or even by foreign ministers, and then consigned to history as an effort to humor a Soviet propaganda exercise, the damage might be modest. The problem is that Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev has maneuvered all the major leaders of the Western world one by one into the commitment to sign the C.S.C.E. declaration at a euphoric 35-nation summit conference in Helsinki, now tentatively scheduled for July 30, less than ten days away.

N.Y. Times
Monday July 21, 1975

. . . and Real Détente

It is true, as Secretary Kissinger has just repeated, that there is no alternative to coexistence of East and West in the nuclear era and that détente—real rather than illusory—must be pursued. But the Helsinki carnival, like the Soviet-American handclasp in space, could mislead many into believing that peace already has arrived. Very limited forms of arms control and East-West cooperation are still accompanied by intensified repression within the U.S.S.R., heightened Soviet rivalry with the West in the Middle East, South Asia and the Indian Ocean and little real sign of progress in strategic or conventional arms reduction talks.

If it is too late to call off the Helsinki summit—or even to delay it for a more propitious moment—every effort must be made there, publicly as well as privately, to prevent euphoria in the West. Equally important the Soviet Union must be put on notice that a Communist takeover by force or subversion of Portugal's democratic revolution will not be accepted by the Western world even if the West may now have acknowledged Soviet domination of its immediate Eastern neighbors.